

THE STATUS REPORT

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REP. KATHLEEN M. TEAHAN BIDS LEGISLATURE ADIEU

It is with great sadness that the MCSW wishes REPRESENTATIVE KATHLEEN M. TEAHAN, D-Whitman, and current Co-Chair of the MA Caucus of Women Legislators, best wishes as she leaves the Massachusetts State Legislature at the end of the month. Rep. Teahan has the MCSW's undying gratitude for championing the Commission's first budget increase this year. Rep. Teahan chose not to seek re-election and will be succeeded in January by Allen McCarthy.

Representing the 7th Plymouth District which includes the towns of Abington, East Bridgewater and Whitman, her priorities have been health care, education, jobs, economic development and environmental protection.

She is currently serving her fifth term as a member of the Joint Committee on Public Health and her first term on the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs.

Representative Teahan also served four years on the Joint Committee on State Administration and on special commissions to study Adoption, End-of-Life Issues, and Complementary and Alternative Medicine.



**REPRESENTATIVE
KATHLEEN M. TEAHAN**

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Second Annual Massachusetts Conference for Women a Huge Success!

Over 4,000 women attended the second annual Massachusetts Conference for Women on December 6th at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. The MCSW is delighted to have been the lead co-sponsor of this important event.

This electrifying, one-day event served as a forum for women to network, discover professional opportunities, and exchange personal experiences on life and career.

Keynote speakers included Iman and Dr. Maya Angelou; they were joined by 80 other powerful female speakers who encouraged women to shine and to help others shine as well. Understanding self-value and the value of other women was a common theme that echoed throughout the day. Each speaker inspired the audience to own successes and mentor others to do the same, addressing issues of business, family and positive world change.

Participants in the second annual Massachusetts Conference for Women walked away from the event rejuvenated and inspired to bring the lessons they learned back to their family, friends and coworkers.



Marian L. Heard and Iman

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Executive Director Corner

The approaching end of the year provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on time gone by, as well as ponder what the New Year will bring. At the MCSW, 2006 saw many accomplishments and high points, including:

- For the first time in its history, the MCSW asked for and was granted an increase in its original budget appropriation. This translated into additional staff and resources so that we can better deliver on our mission of advancing women to full equality and promoting their rights and opportunities.
- We launched the Massachusetts Women's Resource and Referral Network, an online database that puts the information and resources that women and their families need at their fingertips.
- We contributed to the body of state gender disaggregated data with the release of "State of Women: A County by County Report on the Status of Women & Girls in Massachusetts," research that we hope will provoke discussion and drive positive change.
- We began connecting with and getting to know women across the Commonwealth through our Regional Council initiative, which brings together diverse women leaders in 10 areas of the state to better inform the Commission about the status of women in these areas and their key concerns.
- We continued and grew significant collaborations and integration of efforts to more strategically approach women's issues and plan for solutions, such as convening the MA Coalition for Women's Wage Equality, Women's Commissions of MA, MassGAP, the MA Conference for Women, and many others.
- We significantly grew our signature event, the Unsung Heroine Award Initiative, to honor 240 Community Unsung Heroines and 8 MA Unsung Heroines. It was a privilege to highlight the behind the scenes work of so many dedicated and passionate women who are daily working small wonders in their communities. Which brings us to 2007.....

Our Holiday Wishes for 2007:

- We have set the ambitious goal of honoring 351 Unsung Heroines – one from EVERY city and town in Massachusetts. We know there are many, many women out there but WE CANNOT DO THIS WITHOUT YOUR HELP TO IDENTIFY THEM! Nominations are already being accepted with a March 1, 2007 deadline for submission. Honorees will be celebrated at a gala reception at the State House on May 16. Please join us in recognizing the many women of Massachusetts who are quietly, behind the scenes, without any fanfare, making a difference.
- We hope our commitment to advancing Massachusetts women to pay equity will contribute to shrinkage in the wage gap in this state, where women on average make 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts. Our goal is through heightened awareness, grassroots education, coalition building and concrete, integrated and targeted action steps that we will begin to see some positive movement on this front.
- We have high expectations for the next legislative session, which begins in January. There are many important bills that the Commission has endorsed and that need to make it over the goal line this time around: Paid Family Leave, to include paid sick days, establishment of Self Sufficiency Standards, gender neutral insurance policies, kinship care, etc. We will be watching the healthcare reform very closely to make sure that attention is paid to the importance of women having access to safe, affordable health care and preventative care.
- We will continue to strive to improve the status of MA women. We welcome your participation in any and all of our efforts.

May you and yours have a joyous, happy and healthy holiday seasons and last, but certainly not least, we wish for peace on earth – and good will to all Massachusetts women!



Linda Brantley

Commissioner Spotlight

Marianne Fleckner is the newly elected vice-chair of the Commission. She is the Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Finance at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation. Before joining the MDCR, Marianne was employed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as their Associate Commissioner of Management & Operations. Previously, she was with the Massachusetts Human Resources Division where she managed a staff that defined the Commonwealth's Business Requirements for a new automated Human Resources/Compensation Management system. The women's issues she is most involved with are equal pay/equal work, sexual harassment in the workplace and domestic violence.



Marianne Fleckner

- **How did you hear about the Commission?**

I heard about the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women when the Beijing Project was completed in the late 1990's and legislation was filed to create a permanent Commission. At the time, I was on the Governor's Commission on Women's Issues and thought what an excellent opportunity to be on the permanent Women's Commission. When I read the enacting legislation, I applied and was thrilled when I was accepted.

- **Why did you want to volunteer for the Commission?**

I thought it would give me an excellent opportunity to continue to be involved in issues that are important to me. In particular, equal pay for equal work (pay equity). Also, it gives me the opportunity to meet many other women across the Commonwealth, to hear about their particular issues and look to effectuate change.



Pictured from L - R, are Dr. Roseanna Means, MCSW Commissioner; Marianne Fleckner; Elizabeth Houlihan, MCSW Chair

- **You were recently elected Vice-Chair of the Commission; what do you hope to accomplish?**

While being Vice Chair of the Commission, my main priority is the equal pay for equal work (pay equity) project. We've made some great strides already in gathering and analyzing specific data, and my hope is that we can co-sponsor legislation during the next legislative session to address this issue.

In addition to pay equity, the Public Hearings and Regional Councils are another priority of mine and of the Commission. At those meetings, we gather information from women across the state in anticipation of using the data to support legislation and other projects.

"Women should have equal pay for equal work and they should be considered equally eligible to the offices of principal and superintendent, professor and president. So you must insist that qualifications, not sex, shall govern appointments and salaries."

~ Susan B. Anthony

Commission Corner

Coalition of New England Commissions on Women Held Meeting

The Coalition of New England Commissions on Women met in Manchester, New Hampshire on Thursday, December 14 from 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Attending were: Linda Brantley, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Commission, Sonja Darai, Executive Director of the Somerville (MA) Commission, Terri DeLangis, Executive Director of the NH Commission, Wendy Love, Executive Director of the VT Commission, Kimberly Sansoucy, the new Executive Director of the Cambridge Commission, Sarah Standiford, Executive Director of the Maine Women's Policy Center, Laura Harper, Director of Public Policy at the Maine Women's Policy Center, Marie Turley, Executive Director of the



Boston Women's Commission, Pat Nickerson of the Boston Commission, Shanna Wells, Executive Director of the RI Commission, Teresa Younger, the new Executive Director of the CT Commission, and Jacqueline Cooke, Regional Administrator, U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau attended.

The first order of business was to establish new leadership of the group, which until her retirement in June had been led by Nancy Ryan, Executive Director of the Cambridge Women's Commission. The group voted that Linda Brantley would serve as the new Chair with technical assistance to be provided by Jackie Cooke.

Commission staff then presented updates on each of their respective Commission's activities.

- **Vermont:** Wendy Love reported on significant work related to health insurance post divorce. She also indicated that 38% of VT legislators are now women. She recommended that commissions encourage women state legislators to attend "Women in Government" organization conferences. (Vermont recently hosted a national conference.) The *Vermont* State Labor Department currently lists wages by industry on its website. She also said that the Governor's Workforce Diversity and Equity Committee issued a Status Report on men's and women's salaries for state government employees.
- **Maine:** Sarah Standiford reported on Maine's passing a minimum wage bill and on activities resulting from a proposal for a notice requirement when domestic violence abusers go to buy a gun. She indicated that pay equity continues to be an important issue in Maine with the focus on educating businesses and women since Maine has Comparable Worth legislation. She reported that Evelyn Murphy's Wage Project hired two staff members from Maine, Karen Anderson and Annie Houle, who are currently traveling across country working on Wage Clubs. Also, Maine has a women's committee of the state Maine Jobs Council (the state WIA coordinating body). Also underway is Equality Maine, an effort to amend the state FMLA to include domestic partners. They are also working on a bill to establish 7 paid sick days for Maine workers for businesses with 15 or more employees. Maine now has 31% of its legislature as female. Sarah also indicated that one of these legislators may introduce a bill to establish a women's commission in the state.
- **Rhode Island:** This Commission is interested in women in the trades and is working with the university to try to develop recruitment and retention tools for NTO (non-traditional occupations). The RI Commission is planning a young people's event on NTO for March 2008. They are working with Big Sisters, Girl Scouts, and NAWIC (National Association of Women in Construction). They are thinking of including kids from 5th grade – high school and hosting the event at a technical school. RI reported having the lowest percentage of women in the Legislature for New England with 16%. The Commission is working on a legislative drive regarding human trafficking, estimating that 70% of people trafficked are female and 50% are children.

Coalition of New England Women Commissions Continued on page 6

Representative Teahan Continued from page 1

Representative Teahan served as a member of the Special Commission on Oral Health that presented its report to the entire legislature on March 2, 2000; she continues to be a strong advocate for improving oral health. Recently, Representative Teahan became the Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Legislative Caucus on Oral Health, the first oral health caucus in the nation.

What prompted you to run for political office?

Before 1996, I had been a school committee member, school volunteer, president of a scholarship foundation, parish outreach and hospital visitation volunteer, CCD coordinator, a member of the Habitat for Humanity, and an English teacher. I ran for office in 1996 because of my late husband's encouragement. He said that I'd enjoy being a legislator because I liked helping people. I didn't like being a rep., I loved it.

What issues are important to you?

With my work on oral health issues, I was instrumental with ensuring that all pregnant women have dental care, that MassHealth provides preventative and restorative dental care for low-income elderly and disabled individuals, and that many children have access to preventative dental programs. With Senator Harriette Chandler, I am the co-chair of the (first in the nation) Legislative Oral Health Caucus.

Senator Therese Murray and I led the fight to create the Catastrophic Illness in Children's Trust Fund that provides funds for needed health services not covered by insurance. I am proud of my part working on the creation and funding for the Prescription Advantage Program. Maintaining the funding needs for children in foster care and working on adoption issues was also very important to me. As chair of the Caucus of Women Legislators, I lead and successfully secured funding for breast and ovarian cancer detection and treatment services. Securing funds for schools, libraries, parks, police stations, new roads, and local aid was always a priority of mine.

Did you accomplish everything you had hoped to do?

There is much, much more that I had hoped to accomplish, but I am hopeful that my successor Allen McCarthy and Governor-elect Deval Patrick, working with the legislature, will make progress that will benefit all our hard working families in Massachusetts. We need more good jobs with good benefits; alternative energy initiatives; increased revenues; early education and care; Chapter 70 school aid; higher education funding; substance abuse treatments and rehabilitation; open space preservation; and affordable, quality health care, which includes mental and oral health care.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

It was an honor and a pleasure to chair the House Caucus of Women Legislators. The women of the Legislature have been wonderfully supportive. I will never forget our fun times and our challenging experiences together. Working with the Commission on the Status of Women has been a pleasure. The many talents, the dedication, and the friendship we shared give me great hope. When a small group of women get together and work together, we accomplish great things that benefit people throughout our state and the world. I thank all the women who came before me for their guidance, encouragement, and hard work. I wish all the new women coming into the legislature the best of luck in this experience of a lifetime. We must continue to encourage and support more women in politics. I will miss all the people who have made the State House a very special place to be for me the past ten years.

What's next for you?

I will be teaching a political science course at Bridgewater State College in January, 2007 and hope to encourage our next generation to get involved.

Footnote: Representative Teahan has been honored for her legislative efforts by the Congressional Coalition for Adoption Institute (2003 *Congressional Angels in Adoption Award*), Health Care For All (2002 *For the People, Against the Tide Award*), and Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (2003 *Professional Recognition Award*). The Catastrophic Illness in Children's Fund honored her on February 22, 2006, for her dedication to the children of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. On April 23, 2006, Representative Teahan was recognized for her then years of outstanding support of the Special Olympics.

The MCSW would like to thank Representative Teahan for her hard work and support. While we wish her all the best in her future endeavors, she will be sorely missed! We need MORE women holding public office, not less!

Coalition of New England Women Commissions Continued from page 4

- **New Hampshire:** This Commission has been working on the issue of women in prison. There is a Multi-Agency Coordinating Council and NH has been cited by the Department of Justice for work it has done. Terri DeLangis also indicated that this year the NH House is 36% female; the New Hampshire Senate is 42% female. She indicated that this year, the executive directors of women's organizations in the state have galvanized around the issue of the Gender Pay Gap. She indicated that Welfare Reauthorization is a big priority of the Commission and she praised the Rutgers Center for American Women in Politics for its efforts to get more college age women to study politics. She hopes to start a similar Program at the NH Institute of Politics.
- **Connecticut:** Teresa Younger, the new (since December 4!) executive director of the CT Commission discussed a meeting she had just attended that morning of the Statewide CT NEW Program Committee (non-traditional employment for women). CT has continued a program that originated with a Department of Labor Women's Bureau grant program over a decade ago called the NEW Program. Teresa also stated that CT expects to have a report on human trafficking before the Legislature in January. Advocates against trafficking and several state legislators have been working on this issue for several years. The Commission is also working on a HPV vaccine kick off event. This year, the Commission's Making Women Visible Day at the State House will be expanded to include Girl Scouts. Approximately 200 women and girls are expected at the Capital Building on January 24. There is also a new young women's leadership program with 15 young women participating. The Legislature is expected to focus on universal health care this year. There is a Compassionate Care Initiative for rape victims.

Terri and Linda represent New England on the Board of the National Association of Commissions on Women (NACW). Terri is organizing a panel presentation for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women Event in New York on March 7, 8, or 9. The speakers will represent four state, county, and/or city commissions and discuss commission structures, roles, and successes. Linda serves as chair of the NACW Awards Committee.

The New England Women's Commissions meet three times per year.

MCSW Regional Councils News

As the organization charged with being the permanent, effective voice for the women of Massachusetts, the MCSW must have its finger on the pulse of the status of women statewide. To this end, the Commission is establishing a network of ten Regional Councils that will amplify the work of the Commission by educating and advising the MCSW on region specific issues and concerns and emerging trends.

On Wednesday, December 13 MCSW commissioners and staff met with women leaders in Norfolk and Suffolk Counties at the Boston YWCA. Representatives from the business, education, health care, and social services sectors were present at the meeting. The conversation was kicked off after a report of highlights from the recently released "State of Women" report and included discussion about accessibility of services, access to education and employment and increased collaboration of present members.

The convening of Norfolk-Suffolk Regional Council is the third of ten meetings scheduled. The MCSW is looking forward to meeting with Hampden Regional Council in January and to further broadening the network to women leaders with whom the Commission is engaged. The Councils will also afford the Commission the opportunity serve as a convener as well as identify women who can be tapped as potential Commissioners, candidates for either appointed or elected office, and those who should be connected with other women around the state who are focusing on similar issues. For more information on the Regional Councils, please contact Jill Ashton.

Need Resources for Women?

Visit: www.mcswnetwork.com

MCSW to Hold Statewide Public Hearings to Gather Pay Equity

In its efforts to advance Massachusetts women to pay equity, the MCSW, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Coalition for Women's Wage Equality and state legislators, will host a series of statewide hearings to gather women's personal experiences and to provide information on pay equity. Through these hearings the MCSW seeks to document what the wage gap looks like for women in Massachusetts and how it affects them and their families. The feedback received will to be utilized to bolster advocacy efforts.

The second of these hearings will be held on Wednesday, January 17 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. in Springfield at the YWCA of Western Massachusetts, 1 Clough St.

Because women on average make 77 cents for each dollar earned by a male counterpart doing the same job, we know that over the course of a lifetime women lose earnings ranging from \$200,000 to \$2 billion dollars. At these hearings, the MCSW hopes women will share their experiences with wage discrimination, such as how they and their families have been impacted by wage inequities, if they've ever pursued a wage inequity grievance/complaint/lawsuit, etc. Specific examples might include being hired at less than a male counterpart, being passed over for promotions, losing ground when taking time off to raise a family and more. For those who do not wish to share their personal experiences in public, written testimony will be accepted.

"We know that discussing salary information and discrimination is very personal and private and is often confidential, which makes getting to the heart of the matter difficult. However, until women start talking about these issues, comparing notes and building a body of data that can be used to drive change, we will not move off that 77 cent mark," noted Linda Brantley, MCSW Executive Director. "We sincerely hope that women will choose to come forward and share their experiences so that we can utilize them to make things better for ourselves as well as the next generation."

The MCSW would appreciate RSVPs for attendance and intent to testify, which can be done by calling the MCSW at 617-626-6520 or emailing mscw@state.ma.us. *We would also really appreciate your help with outreach to inform all those who are interested in attending and/or testifying.*

All hearings will be held from 5:30 – 7 p.m. Future hearing dates and locations include: January 17, Springfield YWCA, February 28, Boston YWCA, March 28, South Shore TBD, April 25, Amherst and June 6, New Bedford. The Coalition is also considering adding other hearings on the Cape and the Merrimack Valley. Check out our online calendar at www.mass.gov/women for more information as it becomes available.

Other Noteworthy News:

AAUW Winter Conference

To be held on **Saturday, February 3, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** at Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, MA. This AAUW (American Association of University Women) mission-based Winter Conference takes a two pronged approach to the relationship between AAUW and College/University Campuses.

In the morning, *Drawing the Line: Sexual Harassment on Campus* will be briefly reviewed and used as a background for a panel discussion about sexual harassment and sexual assault and college reactions to/prevention efforts for those crimes on Massachusetts' campuses.

In the afternoon, there will be an interactive discussion about how AAUW Branches and the Colleges/Universities partnership can be more mutually supportive.

The cost is \$25.00 per person; Students may pay a reduced cost of \$15.00. The registration check should be made payable to: **AAUW-MA** and then mail to Hollie Bagley, AAUW Registrar, 82 Kimball Beach Road, Hingham, MA 02043. For more information, visit <http://www.aauw-ma.org>.

7th Annual National Woman's Heart Day® Health Fair

To be held on **February 16, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.** at The Shops at Prudential Center in Boston, Belvidere Arcade. Admission is FREE of charge. This is an event where women can obtain heart-health screenings, advice on reducing their personal risks for heart disease, and guidance on adopting heart-healthy lifestyles. In recognition of the importance of focusing on women's heart health, the federal government in 2002 declared the third Friday in February as the annual National Woman's Heart Day®. National Woman's Heart Day® Health Fairs are sponsored by Sister to Sister: Everyone Has a Heart Foundation, Inc. Exhibitor and Sponsorship opportunities are available.

To register, go to www.sistertosister.org or call Carol Mather at (508) 734-2189 for more information.

Upcoming Noteworthy Events & Happenings

January 17, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Hampden Regional Council Meeting

To be held at the YWCA, Springfield, MA.

January 17, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Public Hearing

To be held at the YWCA, Springfield, MA.

January 24, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Essex Regional Council Meeting

To be held at the YWCA, Newburyport, MA.



March 1, 2007 is the last day to nominate a 2007 Community Unsung Heroine

Nomination forms are available online at www.mass.gov/women

Or call the MCSW @ (617) 626-6520 to request one be sent to you.

For a complete listing of events please visit www.mass.gov/women/upcoming.htm

If you have an event that you would like added to future newsletters, or Web site, please e-mail the information to: Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us

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Do you have questions or comments about this newsletter? If so, please contact Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us